

House Republican Press Release

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Stone, Tymniak Vote for Teacher Pension Proposal



State Reps. Cathy C. Tymniak, R-133, and Jack Stone, R-134, have voted for the second year in a row to fully fund the state Teachers' Retirement System.

Reps. Stone and Tymniak are cosponsoring proposals to force the legislature to fund the pension program according to actuarial standards. They voted in the

Appropriations Committee April 17 to bring a constitutional funding resolution, SJ-3, to a vote by the full legislature.

The legislature has failed to fully fund the pension system for several years, and the program now carries an unfunded liability of more than \$5 billion.

Rep. Tymniak said, "If the legislature doesn't properly fund the teachers' pension system, the state will have a larger and larger debt for future generations to pay. It's time to put fiscal responsibility and support for teachers into action."

Rep. Stone said, "Last year, we cosponsored a constitutional amendment requiring full fund of the teachers' pensions. We urged more teacher pension funding to be included in the state's two-year 2005-2007 budget. When those efforts were disregarded, we moved on the House floor to bring up the constitutional amendment for full funding of teachers' pensions. That too was abruptly dismissed by a party-line vote."

A \$245-million payment to the fund is proposed in a 2005-2007 budget adjustment now before the legislature, but there is no guarantee of proper funding in following years, said Reps. Stone and Tymniak.

Rep. Tymniak noted that teachers do not have the ability to negotiate their pension benefits, unlike other state and local government employees.